

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 02066 241321Z
ACTION EUR-12

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R 241228Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7237
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 2066

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: SOPN OGEN XH
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE MOVE OF RFE/RL TO U.S.

REF: STATE 057405

1. THE OPPOSITION OF THE POLISH REGIME TO RFE/RL IS BASED
ABOVE ALL ON RFE'S DEMONSTRATED ABILITY TO RESPOND
QUICKLY TO EVENTS IN POLAND AND TO BROADCAST BACK INTO
THE COUNTRY A TRUE AND USUALLY BALANCED ACCOUNT OF WHAT
IS HAPPENING HERE. THE PROXIMITY OF RFE TO POLAND
HAS GREATLY FACILITATED THIS FAST TURN-AROUND, WHICH DE-
PENDS INCREASINGLY ON THE AUTOMATED TELEPHONE SERVICE
BETWEEN POLAND AND WESTERN EUROPE. (COMMENT: WE UNDER-
STAND THAT THE REGIME HAS A HARD TIME MONITORING TELEPHONE
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CONVERSATIONS OF SHORT DURATION, AND BOTH INTERNAL SOURCES
AND WESTERN EUROPE CONTACTS EXPLOIT THIS TECHNICAL
SHORTCOMING FREQUENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY. END COMMENT.)
MOREOVER, MANY MORE POLES ARE ABLE TO TRAVEL TO WEST
GERMANY THAN TO THE UNITED STATES, AND THESE VISITORS
REPRESENT A VALUABLE RESERVOIR OF INFORMATION ON
DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS.

2. IF RFE/RL IS TRANSFERRED TO THE UNITED STATES AND THERE IS A LARGE TURNOVER OF STAFF, THE POLISH AUTHORITIES MAY CONCLUDE, THAT INITIALLY, THAT RFE/RL'S BROADCASTING EFFICIENCY HAS BEEN IMPAIRED TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT THEY COULD MODERATE THEIR ANTI-RFE LINE, ALTHOUGH THEIR BASIC OPPOSITION TO THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF RFE/RL WOULD NOT BE APPRECIABLY AFFECTED. WE COULD SEE A RETURN TO THE 1971-73 SITUATION, DURING WHICH POLAND DID NOT JAM RFE BROADCASTS AT ALL. BUT THIS POSSIBLE BENEFIT, TOGETHER WITH WHATEVER MONETARY SAVING WHICH MIGHT RESULT, WOULD HAVE TO BE BALANCED AGAINST THE LOSS OF TIMELINESS AND SOURCES WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY GO WITH A CHANGE IN THE LOCATION OF THE STATIONS.

3. POLAND'S INTELLECTUALS AND OTHER LISTENERS WOULD SEE A SHIFT OF THE RADIOS TO THE UNITED STATES AS SIGNIFYING A REDUCTION OF US INTEREST IN POLAND AND A RETREAT UNDER SOVIET PRESSURE. THEIR OWN CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION AS SOURCES TO THE POLISH SERVICE WOULD BE GREATLY DIMINISHED AND THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE EASILY PRESUADED THAT AN ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVING TO THE US GOVERNMENT OF \$3.5 MILLION IS SUFFICIENT REASON FOR MOVING THE RADIOS FROM MUNICH.

4. IN SUM, WE BELIEVE THAT THE TRANSFER OF RFE/RL TO THE UNITED STATES WOULD IMPAIR RFE'S ABILITY TO REACT QUICKLY AND ACCURATELY TO EVENTS IN POLAND. ALTHOUGH RFE/RL'S RESEARCH CAPABILITIES WOULD PROBABLY BE AFFECTED
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LESS DRASTICALLY, THEY TOO WOULD SUFFER SOME LOSS OF CONTACT WITH SOURCES AND RAW INTELLIGENCE. THESE LOSSES OF TIME AND ACCESS WOULD STILL MAKE THEMSELVES FELT, EVEN OF RFE/RL LEFT A STAFF OF REPORTERS AND STRINGERS IN WESTERN EUROPE.
DAVIES

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 24-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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